

**Thomas Jefferson to Henry Dearborn, July 16, 1810,  
from The Works of Thomas Jefferson in Twelve  
Volumes. Federal Edition. Collected and Edited by Paul  
Leicester Ford.**

**TO HENRY DEARBORN<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup> From a copy courteously furnished by Dr. J. S. H. Fogg, of Boston.

Monticello July 16. 10.

Dear General & Friend, —Your favor of May 31. was duly received, and I join in congratulations with you on the resurrection of republican principles in Massachusetts & N. Hampshire, and the hope that the professors of these principles will not again easily be driven off their ground. The federalists, during their short lived ascendancy, have nevertheless, by forcing us from the embargo, inflicted a wound on our interests which can never be cured, & on our affections which will require time to cicatrise. I ascribe all this to one pseudo-republican, Story. He came on (in place of Crownenshield I believe) and staid only a few days, long enough however to get complete hold of Bacon, who giving in to his representations, became panick struck, & communicated his panick to his colleagues & they to a majority of the sound members of Congress. They believed in the alternative of repeal or civil war, and produced the fatal measure of repeal. This is the immediate parent of all our present evils, and has reduced us to a low standing in the eyes of the world. I should think that even the federalists themselves must now be made, by their feelings, sensible of their error. The wealth which the embargo brought home safely, has now been thrown back into the laps of our enemies; and our navigation completely crushed, and by the unwise & unpatriotic conduct of those engaged in it, should the orders prove genuine which are said to have been given against our fisheries, they too are gone; and if not true

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as yet, they will be true on the first breeze of success which England shall feel: for it has now been some years that I am perfectly satisfied her intentions have been to claim the ocean as her conquest, & prohibit any vessel from navigating it but on such a tribute as may enable her to keep up such a standing navy as will maintain her dominion over it. She has hauled in, or let herself out, been bold or hesitating according to occurrences, but has in no situation done

anything which might amount to an acknowledged relinquishment of her intentions. I have ever been anxious to avoid a war with England, unless forced by a situation more losing than war itself, but I did believe we could coerce her to justice by peaceable means, and the embargo, evaded as it was, proved it would have coerced her, had it been honestly executed. The proof she exhibited on that occasion, that she can exercise such an influence in this country as to controul the will of it's government & three fourths of it's people, and oblige the three fourths to submit to one fourth, is to me the most mortifying circumstance which has occurred since the establishment of our government. The only prospect I see of lessening that influence is in her own conduct, & not from any thing in our power. Radically hostile to our navigation and commerce, and fearing its rivalry, she will compleatly crush it, and force us to resort to agriculture, not aware that we shall resort to manufactures also, & render her conquest over our navigation & commerce useless at least, if not injurious to herself in the end, and perhaps salutary to us, as removing out of our way the chief causes & provocations to war.—But these are views which concern the present and future generations, among neither of which I count myself.

You may live to see the change in our pursuits, & chiefly in those of your own state, which England will effect. I am not certain that the change on Massachusetts, by driving her to agriculture, manufactures & emigration will lessen her happiness.—But, once more, to be done with politics—How does Mrs. Dearborne do?—How do you both like your situation?

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—Do you amuse yourself with a garden, a farm, or what?—That your pursuits, whatever they be, may make you both easy, healthy & happy is the prayer of your sincere friend.